



1900 Kanawha Boulevard, East, Building 6 • Charleston, WV 25305
wvde.us

February 2021

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s):

The West Virginia Department of Education will resume the administration of the West Virginia General Summative Assessment (WVGSA) for Grades 3-8 in spring 2021. Last spring, states across the country, including West Virginia, suspended the federally mandated statewide assessments because of school closures resulting from the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Without question, the pandemic has affected student learning and achievement.

Although counties and schools continue to deal with challenges, it is even more critical this year that we obtain data on each of our students to further measure how much impact the pandemic has had on student learning. The WVGSA results will help to identify any achievement gaps that may have occurred so teachers can determine how best to bridge those gaps.

The WVGSA, which measures academic progress for students and schools in West Virginia, is an untimed test administered online. All public school students, including virtual school students, will participate in the WVGSA at the grade level in which they are enrolled, unless they meet the criteria for participation in the West Virginia Alternate Summative Assessment. The test will be administered at your student's school or at an off-site location to be determined by the county.

Students in Grades 3-8 will take the English language arts (ELA) reading, ELA writing, and mathematics sections of the test, with students in Grades 5 and 8 also taking science. Individual student reports will be sent to parents/guardians.

I respectfully request that you encourage your student to perform to his/her best ability during the WVGSA this spring. The Frequently Asked Questions document included with this letter will provide additional details regarding the importance of this year's test administration. A separate informational sheet that provides more details about the WVGSA also is included.

Your student's school will provide you with more information about this year's administration, including when the assessment will be administered. If you have questions or concerns, please contact the principal or counselor at your student's school, or the district test coordinator at your county's board of education office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "W. Clayton Burch".

W. Clayton Burch
State Superintendent of Schools

WCB/VR:cc

Enclosures



Frequently Asked Questions

Spring 2021 West Virginia General Summative Assessment (WVGSA)

Q. Will West Virginia schools administer the WVGSA in spring 2021?

- A. Yes, West Virginia schools will administer the WVGSA in spring 2021 to meet state and federal annual summative assessment requirements. Students in Grades 3-8 will take the English language arts (ELA) reading, ELA writing, and mathematics sections of the test, with students in Grades 5 and 8 also taking science.

Q. What are the benefits for students to take the WVGSA in spring 2021?

- A. The WVGSA provides important information that can be used to help improve teaching and learning for each individual student. Results from the assessment can help teachers and school administrators pinpoint areas of weakness and identify possible achievement gaps to help teachers adjust instruction for each student. It is always important that we obtain a valid measure of your student's academic achievement, but it is even more critical this year we collect assessment data to determine what, if any, impact the COVID-19 pandemic has had on your student's learning.

Q. Do virtual school students have to take the test?

- A. Yes, virtual school students are considered public school students and are required to take the annual statewide summative tests at the grade level they are enrolled. The district will provide additional information regarding testing dates and times.

Q. Are virtual school students required to take the test at the school?

- A. All students must take the tests in-person at the schools where they are enrolled or at off-site locations established by the county for testing. Counties and schools will determine a schedule and notify you of when and where your student is to report for testing. Counties and schools have several options for testing that will enable them to follow required mitigation protocols to ensure all students can take their tests safely. Talk to your student's school to determine the best solution for ensuring your student can take the test.

Q. Can students take the test remotely?

- A. No, remote testing is not allowed. All tests are administered in an in-person setting.

Q. Can students opt out of taking the state's summative assessment in spring 2021?

- A. Neither West Virginia law nor the regulations of the West Virginia Board of Education contain any provisions for "opting-out" of statewide assessments, and we are aware of no legal right for parents or students to do so.

Q. Will students' WVGSA scores affect their grades, promotion, or graduation?

- A. No, results from the WVGSA will not affect students' grades or keep students from advancing to the next grade or graduating high school.

For additional information regarding the spring 2021 statewide assessments, please contact your student's school.

West Virginia General Summative Assessment Grades 3-8

An Informational Guide for Parents/Guardians



This informational guide provides additional information regarding the West Virginia General Summative Assessment, including a breakdown of each content area test. The mathematics and English Language Arts (ELA) tests are computer adaptive, which means the tests adapt to each individual student based on whether the student answers the questions correctly. The science test is a matrix design, which means each student will see items covering a portion of the grade-band standards. To review items similar to those students may see on the assessment, we encourage you take a practice test by visiting <https://wv.portal.airast.org/training-tests.html>.

Mathematics Test

Grades 3-8 Participate

- The test administered at each grade covers that grade's mathematics content.

Item Types

- Multiple-Choice Questions
- Computer-Enabled Questions

Grade level assessment concepts are shown below:

Grades 3-5

Concepts/Procedures

- Numbers and Operations in Base Ten and Fractions
- Operations and Algebraic Thinking
- Measurement, Data, and Geometry

Modeling and Problem Solving

Use Mathematical Reasoning

Grade 6

Concepts/Procedures

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships and Number Systems
- Expressions and Equations
- Geometry & Statistics and Probability

Modeling and Problem Solving

Use Mathematical Reasoning

Grade 7

Concepts/Procedures

- Ratios and Proportional Relationships and Number Systems
- Expressions and Equations
- Geometry
- Statistics and Probability

Modeling and Problem Solving

Use Mathematical Reasoning

Grade 8

Concepts/Procedures

- Expressions and Equations and Number Systems
- Functions
- Geometry & Statistics and Probability

Modeling and Problem Solving

Use Mathematical Reasoning

ELA Test

Grades 3-8 Participate

- The test administered at each grade covers that grade's ELA content.

Item Types

- Multiple-Choice Questions
- Computer-Enabled Questions

Two Components

- ELA Reading
- ELA Writing – Students will read sources and write an essay in response to a given prompt.

Students must complete both the reading and the writing sections to obtain an overall ELA Score.

Grade level assessment concepts are shown below:

Grades 3-8

- Reading Literature
- Reading Informational
- Writing

Science Test

Grades 5 & 8 Participate

- The test administered in Grade 5 covers science content taught in Grades 3, 4, and 5.
- The test administered in Grade 8 covers science content taught in Grades 6, 7, and 8.

Item types

- Multiple-Choice Questions
- Computer-Enabled Questions
- Embedded Field Test Questions

Grade Band assessment concepts are shown below:

Grades 5 & 8

- Life Science
- Physical Science
- Earth and Space Science